

CANVASSING



KANSAS

An update on election news in Kansas.

Thornburgh proposes election improvement plan

The closeness and uncertainty of the 2000 presidential election and the events that occurred in Florida have created nationwide interest in election reform. Public debate has increased on voting equipment and procedures, recounts and the presidential Electoral College. In every state there is pressure from the public and the media to review the electoral process and fix what needs to be fixed. The themes of the day are upgrading technology, improving procedures for ballot counting and recounting, standardization of voting systems, and possible reform of the Electoral College.

Kansas is no exception. When the Kansas Legislature convened January 8, 2001, many members expressed an interest in hearing the status of elections in Kansas and a comparison of this state to others. The chairpersons of the elections committees in both the House and the Senate invited Ron Thornburgh and members of his staff to give them a status report. In early January, Thornburgh and election director Brad Bryant presented information to the House Committee on Ethics and Elec-

tions for several hours spanning two days. On the Senate side, the Committee on Elections and Local Government heard a similar presentation. The Senate committee also invited several county election officers to speak about the types of voting equipment used in their counties. Johnson County Election Commissioner Connie Schmidt spoke on electronic voting systems; Shawnee County Election Commissioner Elizabeth Ensley and Lyon County Clerk Karen Hartenbower spoke on optical scan systems; and Mitchell County Clerk Joleen Walker and Washington County Clerk Lou Kern spoke on paper ballot systems.

The main theme of the Secretary of State's presentation was that Kansas did not experience the problems that occurred in Florida's presidential election. Specifically, Kansas has no punch card voting systems and has not had them for nearly 20 years. Thus, there are no hanging, dimpled or pregnant chads in our system. We have no grace periods for ballots to be counted if they're received up to ten days after the election, nor do we

The Secretary of State's Six-Point Election Improvement plan is on page 11 of this newsletter

have a provision allowing mailed ballots to be counted if they're postmarked by election day. Further, we have a recount law that is workable, with clear deadlines and procedures.

However, the intense public and media scrutiny and demand for reform offer a unique opportunity to bring about changes in certain areas. Secretary Thornburgh developed a Six-Point Election Improvement Plan and presented it to the Legislature in January. It is a blueprint for his intentions over the next couple of years to improve Kansas elections.

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Thornburgh selected president of NASS

Kansas Secretary of State Ron Thornburgh has been selected by his colleagues across the nation to serve as president of the National Association of Secretaries of State. Thornburgh has been active in the organization since taking office in January 1995.

Thornburgh said, "I am excited about the opportunity to lead NASS and to participate in the national discussion of issues affecting all Secretaries of State, particularly the discussion of election reform arising from the 2000 experience."

Thornburgh has served on several committees of NASS, including a committee that recently developed a resolution

containing recommended responses to the 2000 election controversy. The resolution was publicized at the NASS conference in Washington, D.C. in early February. The 2000 presidential election has focused public and media attention on the electoral process and has resulted in many federal and state legislative initiatives intended to correct perceived problems with the system. The controversy could bring about needed reforms and federal funding to help pay for them.

Secretary Thornburgh will be officially installed as president of NASS at the organization's summer conference in Little Rock, Arkansas in July.

DMV Sending Changes of Address Electronically

The Division of Motor Vehicles is beginning to send some changes of address for voter registration to the county election officers by e-mail. Last year the DMV initiated a program where driver's license holders could access its Internet site and submit their changes of address electronically. While most people still submit them on paper, for those that were electronic the state DMV office had been mailing printouts of the address changes to county election officers.

Beginning February 26, 2001, the DMV announced its plan to send the address changes by e-mail. For a four-week trial period,

county election officers will receive these address changes in two ways: by e-mail and by printout. After the trial period, if the system is working well the DMV will cease sending the printouts.

The address changes are sent to the WAN e-mail network established by the Department of Revenue. Each county clerk has an address in the WAN system, and they are being encouraged to check their mailboxes regularly to receive the address changes. Many clerks maintain a separate e-mail address with a local provider, but for consistency's sake the DMV will not use those alternative addresses for sending the address changes.

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Plans developed cooperatively between Secretary of State Ron Thornburgh and Director of Vehicles Sheila Walker include the goal of the DMV collecting all voter registration data electronically and sending it to county election officers in electronic files, thus eliminating all paper from their system. We continue to work toward that goal.

RON THORNBURGH

Kansas Secretary of State



Election Reform

Dear Friends:

As you know, there have been many discussions about the need for election reform in the country.

I am happy to lead this discussion as the president-elect of the National Association of Secretaries of State. NASS has adopted an aggressive election reform resolution, which makes a number of recommendations directed at federal, state, and local governments and election officials.

Although the problems generating this discussion didn't occur in Kansas, we will be affected by the deliberation and resulting reform. I am a strong proponent and committed to protecting an individual's right to vote by ensuring access, accuracy and integrity in elections throughout America. In addition, we must ensure that state and county election officials continue to have the primary responsibility of conducting elections.

Most of the federal reform efforts invite grant dollars for technology in the election process. However, you and I know technology won't solve all of our problems. We must also continue to focus on voter and election administration education. I welcome any ideas you have on these issues.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Ron Thornburgh".

RON THORNBURGH
Secretary of State

Thornburgh convenes commission to study Electoral College

Because 2000 was a *presidential* election year, the November 7 election was not over until December 18, 2000. That was the day prescribed in federal law for the presidential electors to meet in the state capital in each state to cast the official Electoral College votes for the offices of president and vice president of the United States.

The State Board of Canvassers, consisting of the Governor, Attorney General and Secretary of State, had met December 1 to certify the official results of the November 7 general election. At the canvass they certified that the six Republican electors had received the greatest number

of popular votes. During the next few days the Secretary of State's office issued certificates of election to the electors and invitations to convene at the Capitol at noon December 18.

Although Kansas law does not bind the presidential electors to vote for the candidate who won the popular vote, they nearly always do, and 2000 was no exception. The electors cast six votes for George W. Bush for president and six votes for Dick Cheney for vice president.

The nationwide vote for president was the closest in history, and the outcome of the Electoral College vote was not certain until the U.S. Supreme Court finalized the results of the recounts in

Florida. That uncertainty has created a nationwide debate on the merits of the Electoral College, and Secretary of State Ron Thornburgh decided the time was right for a state-level discussion in Kansas.

During the weeks leading up to the Electoral College vote, Thornburgh appointed a panel of experts called the Electoral College Review Commission. The commission's members were

establishing a number of bonus electoral votes for the popular vote winner, changing to a proportional vote by congressional district (as in Nebraska and Maine), or relying upon the direct popular vote if no candidate received a majority in the Electoral College. Most nationwide reforms would require amending the U.S. Constitution and therefore would be extremely difficult because only 13 state legislatures could defeat the

ratification of any amendment.

(2) Make recommendations, if needed, for state-level reform of the Electoral College. As chief state

Members of the Electoral College Review Commission

Jack Brier, former Secretary of State
Jim Concannon, Dean, Washburn University School of Law
Mel Kahn, Professor of Political Science, Wichita State University
Mark Joslyn, Asst. Professor of Political Science, University of Kansas
Pat Hurley, Former Secretary of Administration and House Majority Leader

Jan Meyers, former Congresswoman
Dr. Bill Roy Sr., former Congressman
Steve Rose, former Publisher, Sun Newspapers
Emerson Lynn, Publisher, Iola Register
Ruth Garvey Fink, Topeka businesswoman
Mike Glassner, Former special assistant to Bob Dole

invited to meet the morning of December 18 to discuss possible Electoral College reform and other issues arising from the 2000 election. They recessed for lunch and observed the Kansas electors as they cast their votes, then reconvened for an afternoon session.

Thornburgh charged the commission with two tasks:

(1) Make recommendations, if needed, for nationwide reform of the Electoral College. Beginning in July 2001, Thornburgh will serve as president of the National Association of Secretaries of State and will be in a position to participate in the nationwide debate. Possible reforms include abolishing the Electoral College,

election official, Thornburgh could make recommendations to the Kansas Legislature. Possible reforms could be binding the electors to vote for the popular vote winner and using proportional voting instead of a winner-take-all system.

At the end of the day the commission recommended no substantive reforms of the Electoral College system but did recommend further study of the concept of relying on the direct popular vote to determine the winner if no candidate received a majority in the Electoral College. Also, commission members thought the idea of binding electors should be considered on a nationwide basis.

2000 federal census data released



The first summary data from the 2000 federal census have been released. The resident population of the United States on April 1, 2000 was 281,421,906, and the resident population of Kansas was 2,688,418. As expected, Kansas will retain its four seats in the U.S. House of Representatives.

In April, state officials are expecting to receive the U.S. Census Bureau's redistricting data file. This will have the state's population broken down by every relevant geographic entity, including county, township, city, census tract, precinct and census block. The data also will have the necessary age and racial/ethnic breakdowns for redistricting purposes.

These data will be used in the 2002 state legislative session for redistricting of the four U.S. Representative districts, 40 Kansas Senate districts, 125 Kansas House districts, and 10 State Board of Education districts. The new districts will be in effect for the 2002 elections.

The Kansas Constitution requires an adjustment of the U.S. Census figures before they may be used for state legislative

redistricting. As in the 1990 census, the Legislature assigned to the Secretary of State the task of carrying out the constitutionally mandated adjustment of the census population data. The adjustment requires that two of the largest transient population groups - college students and military personnel - must be counted at their permanent residences. Students and military personnel were issued questionnaires in early 2000, asking them if they considered their school or military address to be their permanent residence, or if they wanted to be counted at home with their parents or other family members. Using the data from the questionnaires, a database has been built to be used to adjust the block-level federal census data when they are received in April.

Mike Brassel is in charge of the adjustment project for the Secretary of State's office. Mike was formerly employed in the elections division before taking on his census duties. State law requires the adjusted census data to be reported to the Legislature by July 31, 2001. During the remainder of 2001, the

Legislature's Redistricting Advisory Group, a joint committee of House and Senate members, will oversee preparations for the redistricting process in the 2002 legislative session.

General Accounting Office studies polling place accessibility

The federal General Accounting Office, an investigative agency for Congress, completed a review of polling place accessibility in the November 2000 general election. It was reported in the December 2000 issue of this newsletter that the GAO, implementing a request from some U.S. Senators, had selected 100 counties across the nation to visit election day.

Three Kansas counties were selected to be part of the study: Johnson, Sedgwick and Wilson. GAO personnel coordinated with the Secretary of State's office during the months leading up to the election to gain random access to polling places in those counties.

There has been little contact with the GAO since the election. Representatives of the GAO met with the National Association of State Election Directors at the annual winter conference in February in Washington, D.C. At the conference they indicated that a report would be issued later this year, after the results of their survey were complete.

City and school Spring elections underway

The 2001 city and school spring elections are underway. Newly elected county clerks who took office January 8, 2001 were immediately faced with the task of conducting their first elections within weeks after taking their oaths. The first job was managing the candidate filing deadline on January 23,

2001, then making the determination whether there would be primary elections in the various cities and school districts.

If more than two candidates file for a given position, by law the county election officer must conduct a primary to reduce the number of candidates to two for the general election.

Fourteen new county election officers take office

The 2000 election produced 14 new county clerks. In addition to these new members of the Kansas County Clerks and Election Officials Association, there are some county clerks who were appointed to their positions in the months leading up to the 2000 election.

There is an additional group of clerks not listed here who took office in the past one to two years. Each of them has several elections behind them now, so they're too experienced to be included on a new clerks list.

Newly elected county clerks are:

Bourbon County: Joanne Long
Brown County: Debbie Parker
Butler County: Ron Roberts
Cheyenne County: Terry Miller
Ford County: Vicki Wells
Greenwood County: Debbie Wyckoff
Hamilton County: Marcia Ashmore
Hodgeman County: Barbara Smidt
Lincoln County: Dawn Harlow
Seward County: Stacia Long
Stevens County: Pam Bensel
Wabaunsee County: Jennifer Savage
Wallace County: Melody Fulton

Some of the county clerks who took office by appointment during the past year are:

Cherokee County: Sandy Soper
Lane County: Crysta Torson
Osage County: Rhonda Beets
Rush County: Barbara Matal
Saline County: Don Merriman

The Secretary of State's office wishes to congratulate the new clerks and welcome them to the ranks of Kansas election officers. We look forward to working with each of you in the coming years to continue the tradition of providing efficient and fair elections for all Kansans.

Wichita State University facilitates new county clerk orientation

Newly elected and appointed county clerks were welcomed as members of their professional association at an orientation for newly-elected county clerks in Wichita February 1-2, 2001. The orientation session was organized by Mary Gilmore, Morton County clerk and president of the Kansas County Clerks and Election Officials Association, and the association's education committee. The sessions were part of the Sanborn Academy, a continuing series of training sessions for county clerk certification, facilitated by the Hugo Wall School of Urban and Public Affairs at Wichita State University.

More than 20 county clerks attended the two-day session, including clerks elected in 2000 and others who had taken office during the past few years who wanted a refresher course. The course consisted of presentations on elections, county government, legal issues and budgeting.

The Secretary of State's office was invited to present information on election laws, current election issues and election procedures on Thursday, February 1. The six-hour session was conducted by Secretary of State Ron Thornburgh, legal counsel Melissa Wangemann and election director Brad Bryant. Dis-

cussions were organized to provide a primer on election laws and other legal resources; spring city/school elections facing new county clerks upon taking office; and national and state trends in elections.

The orientation was well received by those in attendance, and it is hoped the county clerks received the information they need to become acclimated to their numerous duties. KCCEOA president Mary Gilmore and the education committee, chaired by Leavenworth County Clerk Linda Scheer, are to be commended for their efforts in educating their new colleagues.

2001 elections legislation proposed

Most years the Secretary of State's office proposes legislation to improve the electoral process in Kansas. This year, the following four bills were proposed to the 2001 Legislature:

Election Administration Bill

- Remove requirements that petition circulators be residents of the county and election district and qualified electors. This would comply with a U.S. Supreme Court decision in a Colorado case.
- Authorize county election officers to send notices to permanent advance voters who don't return their ballots (which are automatically sent to them) notifying them that their name will be taken off the permanent advance voting list unless a new request is made within 30 days.
- Allow voters to request that the county election officer not disclose their addresses on the voter registration file. We have received requests from judges, law enforcement personnel and crime victims.

Recount Bill

- Provide for a special recount in statewide races. Allow a candidate to file with Secretary of State for statewide recount after the state canvass.

Cleanup Bill

- Change KSA 25-3102 on vacancies among county canvass boards to account for counties that have 5 commissioners instead of 3.

- Delete the reference to KSA 25-3802 in KSA 25-3801 because 25-3802 was repealed. These statutes deal with county party meetings to choose officers and appointments to vacant precinct committee positions.
- Delete "19" (for the year) in KSA 25-616 and 25-618.
- Delete the reference to KSA 25-410 (oath of challenged ballot) in KSA 25-413. The oath statute was repealed with NVRA in 1996. The affidavit on the voter registration card is used instead.
- Change 1992 to 2002 and June 12 to June 10 in KSA 25-205.
- Delete county surveyor from ballot forms in KSA 25-213 and 25-

611(b). The elected office of county surveyor in Wyandotte and Shawnee counties was abolished in 1999.

Election Crimes Bill

- Broaden the voter intimidation statute to prevent situations as in the 2000 election where someone contacted voters of a certain party and told them they had to present their voter registration card at the polling place before voting.
- Include voter registration in election crimes. Example: failure to turn registration cards in to the county election officer, destroying cards from members of another party.
- Make electioneering statute apply to the full advance voting period, not just election day.
- Prohibit vote trading such as Nader's Traders in 2000.

Four bills have been proposed by the Secretary of State's office to the 2001 Legislature

Midwest Election Officials Conference planned

Plans are underway for a 2001 Midwest Election Officials Conference in Kansas City this December. This will be the fourth MEOC in history, dating back to 1987. Secretary of State Ron Thornburgh has had discussions recently with the secretaries of state in Nebraska, Iowa and Missouri to promote the concept, and all have agreed.

This will be a national-level conference featuring well-known speakers in the field of elections. It is designed specifically for county election officers to receive information on current nationwide trends in elections, prospects for the future, and practical, hands-on strategies for managing elections. It will provide a chance to renew contacts with colleagues in Kansas and other states and to establish new ones. Best of all, it's done at a reasonable price.

After the 1997 MEOC it was suggested that Omaha in June be considered as an alternative to Kansas City in December, but with the 2000 elections and two of the four states having new secretaries, the earlier date proved to be impossible.

The details so far are incomplete as to the exact dates and hotel location, but they will be forthcoming. Make plans to attend, and mark your calendar when the details are released.

State legislation considered on elections, ethics and campaign finance

Following is a list of bills being considered by the 2001 Kansas Legislature. These bills all deal with elections, ethics or campaign finance. This list is limited to those that affect county election officers in some way. Bills introduced by the Secretary of State's office also are detailed elsewhere in this newsletter.

Senate Bills

SB 47—This bill deals with county objection boards that make rulings when objections are filed against the nomination of candidates. Current law designates the county election officer, county or district attorney, and clerk of the district court as members of the objection board. The bill would replace the court clerk with “an elected official of the county whose position is not involved in the controversy, who shall be designated by the county election officer.” *Bill passed Senate committee.*

SB 62—This bill is called the constitutional awareness act. It would require any person seeking election or appointment to state office or positions subject to Senate confirmation to take an open-book test on the constitution of Kansas. The test would be prepared by the Board of Regents, printed and distributed by the SOS, and the results filed with the SOS and county clerk. *Hearing conducted 2/01; committee amended bill to require candidates and appointees to receive copy of the U.S. Constitution, Kansas Constitution, and Immigration & Naturalization Service's citizenship test and answer key instead of test over Kansas Constitution. Bill passed committee as amended.*

SB 63—This bill would require people to provide the last four digits of their Social Security numbers on voter registration applications. This is intended to help identify voters, eliminate duplicates and track people who move across county lines and for one reason or another aren't canceled from their previous residences. *Amended by Senate committee to prohibit election officers from publicly disclosing Soc. Sec. #s in voter registration records. Bill passed Senate committee 2/7/01.*

SB 102—This is an election crimes bill. It would prohibit people from disseminating false information intended to keep voters from voting. (See also SB 128.)

SB 107—This bill deals with petitions. It would delete the requirement that the county/district attorney review petitions before they are circulated. *Senate conducted hearing, amended the bill and passed it 2/6/01.*

SB 108—This bill would require candidates for statewide office to file their campaign finance reports with the SOS electronically beginning January 1, 2002.

SB 125—Proposed by the SOS, this is a technical cleanup election bill. It would do 6 things: (1) set later candidate filing dates for state and national offices if redistricting is not completed by the Legislature early in the 2002 session; (2) remove “county surveyor” from ballot preparation statutes because no counties elect surveyors anymore; (3) delete a reference to KSA 25-410 in KSA 25-413 (challenged ballot statute) because 25-410 was repealed with NVRA in 1996; (4) change the reference to 19__ in KSA 25-616 and 25-618, which are ballot preparation statutes; (5) amend KSA 25-3102, dealing with vacancies on county boards of canvassers, to accommodate counties that have 5 canvassers instead of 3; (6) delete a reference to KSA 25-3802 in KSA 25-3801 because 25-3802 was repealed. *Senate committee conducted hearing 1/30/01 and passed the bill with one minor technical amendment.*

SB 126—Proposed by the SOS, this bill would provide a procedure for a candidate for statewide office to request a recount by making a single request of the SOS. The candidate would post bond to cover the costs if the results are not reversed. The counties would conduct the recount under the direction of the SOS during the week following the election, as is the case with recounts now. *Senate committee conducted hearing 2/8/01 along with SB 256.*

SB 127—Proposed by the SOS, this is an election administration bill. It would do 3 things: (1) loosen the requirements of petition circulators, only requiring them to be Kansas residents, to comply with a recent U.S. Supreme Court decision; (2) provide a procedure for county election officers to remove permanent advance voters from the list if they don't return their advance ballots; (3) allow a voter to request the county election officer not publicly reveal the voter's residence address on the voter registration file if their safety is endangered. *Senate committee conducted hearing 1/30/01. Bill was amended to authorize election officers to use death lists from Soc. Sec. Administration to clean up voter files. Bill passed Senate committee as amended. Passed full Senate 2/14/01.*

SB 128—Proposed by the SOS, this is an election crimes bill. It would do 4 things: (1) create a new crime of voter registration suppression to require people who conduct voter registration to diligently send completed applications to the county election officer; (2) prohibit voters from trading their votes with other voters, as in the case of Nader's Traders in 2000; (3) broaden the voter intimidation crime statute to prohibit disseminating false information by any means (including phones and electronic means) intended to keep voters from voting;

(4) expand the electioneering statute to include the advance voting period, not just election day at the polling place. *Bill referred to Senate Judiciary Committee; hearing held 2/12/01.*

SB 218—Proposed by the SOS, this bill clarifies when and how provisional ballots are reviewed. It states that provisional ballots are not to be opened and counted by the county election officer between election day and the county canvass. At the county canvass, the unopened provisional ballots are to be reviewed, and only those that are deemed valid are to be opened and counted.

SB 256—Proposed by the governor, this bill would cause an automatic recount in statewide races, presidential, state legislative, and U.S. senate and representative races if the margin of victory was 0.5% or less. Counties are required to electronically send their results (they may fax) to the SOS by 10 a.m. on the Monday after the county canvass. The SOS would direct the counties to conduct the recount if necessary. A candidate may decline to have the recount conducted. Costs are paid by the counties except when a hand recount is requested by a candidate in counties that do not normally count by hand; in such cases the candidate must post a bond to cover the costs. (See also SB 126, the SOS statewide recount bill.) *Senate committee conducted hearing 2/8/01.*

SB 277—This is an ethics bill that would prohibit any officer or employee of state or local government from withholding or diverting employees' wages for contributions to political committees except with written permission by the employee.

SB 284—This is a campaign finance bill that would require campaigns for precinct committee positions to report receipts and expenditures if their campaigns cost more than \$100. Reports would be filed with the county election officer.

SCR 1604—This resolution, if passed by 2/3 of both the House and Senate, would create a constitutional question on the statewide ballot in November 2002. The amendment would require all district court judges to be appointed and retained. None would be elected.

House Bills

HB 2095—This bill would create a new district court judge position in judicial district 7, Douglas County.

HB 2110—This bill deals with releasing election results on election day and night. It prohibits the release of any election results or projected election results before the polls are closed. *House committee conducted hearing 1/31/01.*

HB 2197—This bill would authorize the county election officer to cancel the registration of a voter who failed to vote in 2 consecutive general elections. The CEO would mail a notice to each such voter informing them of the

cancellation and enclosing a new voter registration application form. (Note: This bill is a violation of the NVRA.)

HB 2213—Proposed by the SOS, this is an election administration bill with the same provisions as SB 127.

HB 2214—Proposed by the SOS, this is a statewide recount bill with the same provisions as SB 126.

HB 2215—Proposed by the SOS, this is a technical cleanup bill with the same provisions as SB 125.

HB 2239—Proposed by the SOS, this is an election crimes bill with the same provisions as SB 128.

HB 2259—This is an advance voting bill. It amends a provision put into law in 2000 that requires persons distributing blank advance ballot applications to return the signed applications to the county election officer within 72 hours. The 2000 provision required transmittal within 48 hours.

HB 2260—This is a recount bill. It would require an automatic recount in statewide races on a county-by-county basis if the preliminary abstracts indicated a winning margin of 0.5% or less in that county. The costs would be paid by each county.

HB 2297—This bill increases the size of the Kansas Court of Appeals from 10 judges to 14 judges by adding one judge in each of the next 4 years.

HB 2298—This bill would change the election/retention of district magistrate judges. It would require them to stand for retention or election in their entire judicial district rather than in their county of residence.

HB 2334—This bill would require that municipal judges be elected rather than appointed by the governing body. *House committee conducted hearing 2/12/01.*

HB 2350—This is a recount bill. It states that if a recount is requested in a multi-county district, the provisional ballots must be recounted using the same method in all counties. If the counties cannot agree on a method, the SOS decides.

HB 2385—This bill would establish a bipartisan commission on campaign finance reform. The commission would recommend changes to the governor and legislature on how to improve the campaign finance system for state and local offices.

HB 2401—This is the Kansas commemorative coin design act. It creates a commemorative coin design commission to design 4 possible designs for the U.S. Mint to use in coining the Kansas commemorative quarter. The SOS would submit the designs to the high school students statewide for a vote. The winning design would be sent by the governor to the U.S. Mint.

HB 2439—This is a campaign ethics bill. It establishes limits on campaign expenditures for statewide and legislative races. Any candidate for those offices who

see Legislation, p. 10

Federal legislation addresses election reform

There is a flood of legislation that has been proposed in Congress in the wake of the 2000 election. All of it is intended to promote reform in one way or another. Most of the significant pieces of legislation have several things in common: (1) they provide for a panel to study elections and recommend reforms, (2) they provide some type of federal funding to pay for the changes, and (3) they require states and localities to apply for the funds and specify the types of improvements they will bring about.

1. S. 3273, also known as the Voting Study and Improvement Act of 2000, is supported by Sen. Sam Brownback. Its principal sponsor is Sen. Chuck

Schumer (D-NY). It would authorize the Federal Election Commission to conduct a study of the feasibility and advisability of alternate means and instruments of voting. The FEC's report would be due December

31, 2001.

The bill would provide \$250 million in grants in fiscal year 2002 for

states and localities, who would have to match 25% of the grants.

2. S. 1, also known as the McConnell-Torricelli Election Reform Act, is supported by Sen. Pat Roberts. Its principal sponsors are Sen. Mitch McConnell (R-KY) and Sen. Robert Torricelli (D-NJ). It would consolidate the Federal Election

Commission's Office of Election Administration with the Department of Defense's Federal Voting Assistance Office into a new permanent commission called the Election Administration Commission. The commission would be a bipartisan group to research efficient ways to improve the election process and to serve as a resource for states in keeping pace with technological change. The bill would provide \$100 million annually in grant money on a 25% matching funds basis.

There are many other bills under consideration and many blue-ribbon panels, task forces and commissions studying the 2000 elections and recommending reforms. The Kansas Secretary of State's office will monitor those that appear to have a chance of passing into law and keep county election officers informed.

U.S. Senators Sam Brownback and Pat Roberts have signed on as sponsors of the two bills.

Legislation

Continued from p. 9

signs a statement of intent to be bound by the expenditure limitations is exempt from paying the candidate filing fee.

HCR 5013—This concurrent resolution, if passed by 2/3 of both houses, will create a statewide constitutional amendment election at the "general election to be held on August 6, 2002" (this date is an apparent error that will need to be corrected) on the subject of taxation of certain property of public utilities.

HCR 5015—This concurrent resolution, if passed by 2/3 of both houses, will create a statewide constitutional amendment election at the 2002 general election on the subject of

public retirement systems.

HCR 5018—This concurrent resolution, if passed by 2/3 of both houses, will create a statewide constitutional amendment election at the 2002 general election on the subject of prohibiting any type of tax rate increase without a 2/3 vote of both houses of the Kansas legislature.

HCR 5019—This concurrent resolution, if passed by 2/3 of both houses, will create a statewide constitutional amendment election at the 2002 general election on the subject of creating a new article in the Kansas Constitution setting limits on state expenditures.

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Secretary of State's Six-Point Election Improvement Plan

1. Training of Local Officials

- Ø **Increase training of county election officers, with emphasis on:**
 - processing provisional ballots
 - recount procedures
 - the latest voting equipment
 - voter registration file maintenance
- Ø **Provide information to county canvassers and county attorneys to increase uniformity in:**
 - canvassing procedures and ballot counting
 - recounts
 - provisional ballots
- Ø **Midwest Election Officials Conference in 2001**
 - Coordinate with Iowa, Missouri and Nebraska to conduct a national-quality conference for county election officers.
 - Invite experts to present ideas on current election issues.
 - Provide interstate and intrastate sharing of ideas.

2. Innovation and Technology Exposition

- Ø **Conduct forums at the Midwest Election Officials Conference where manufacturers, vendors and election experts will provide demonstrations, education and training on technology, including:**
 - Voting equipment
 - Software for voter registration and election administration
 - Computer technology for the election office

Ø **Online voting**

Continue efforts at the national level to develop standards of security for Internet-based online voting.

Coordinate with the:

- National Association of Secretaries of State (NASS)
- National Association of State Election Directors (NASED)
- Federal Election Commission (FEC)

3. Federal Legislation

- Ø **Monitor federal legislation that addresses election issues.**
- Ø **Seek federal grants to improve election technology and training.**

Establish a procedure for the state to apply for and receive federal funds and disburse them to counties.

- Ø **Participate in the national debate on possible reforms, including:**
 - the Electoral College
 - standardized voting equipment
 - improved voting procedures
 - ballot design and tabulation

4. Voting Equipment Standards

- Ø **Monitor and assist in updating the FEC's voting equipment standards.**

Plan for adoption of FEC software standards in Kansas.

- Ø **Participate in the further development of standards for the Independent Testing Authority process through NASS and NASED.**

5. Voter File Security and Maintenance

- Ø **Improve the means for purging ineligible voters, including the use of:**
 - a statewide list of deceased persons from the Bureau of Vital Statistics
 - a statewide list of deceased persons from the Social Security Administration
 - a statewide list of persons convicted of state felonies
 - lists of noncitizens from the Division of Motor Vehicles and jury lists
- Ø **Continue efforts with the Division of Motor Vehicles to automate voter registration data collection and transfer, including:**
 - driver's license changes of address
 - new registrations

6. Legislation

- Ø **Establish a recount procedure for statewide offices.**
- Ø **Update election crimes statutes.**
 - Voter intimidation
 - Voter registration suppression
 - Electioneering during advance voting
 - Vote trading

